



# The Analysis on Singapore's Capability in Deft Maneuvering between China and the West

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## Abstract

In an era marked by growing tensions between Western countries and China, Singapore emerges as a pivotal player in bridging the divide. This island nation's unique position allows it to serve as a neutral interpreter of China for the Western world. Let us delve into the reasons behind Singapore's ability to navigate this delicate geopolitical landscape. This essay explores Singapore's unique position and capabilities in addressing the complex issues arising between China and the West. As a small city-state with a strategic location and a diverse population, Singapore has developed a multifaceted approach to diplomacy and international relations. This paper also examines Singapore's historical ties with both China and Western nations, its role as a mediator in geopolitical conflicts, and its policy frameworks that promote dialogue and cooperation. By leveraging its economic strengths and diplomatic neutrality, Singapore aims to foster stability in a rapidly changing global landscape. The analysis highlights Singapore's potential as a bridge between two significant powers, emphasizing the importance of its diplomatic strategies in navigating contemporary challenges.

**Keywords:** Bilateral relations, China, Cultural affinity, Economic interdependency, Geopolitical tensions, Singapore, Special relationship, US-China decoupling, West.

## 1. Introduction

Singapore's close relationship with both the West and China provides it with a distinct advantage. As the only country outside Northeast Asia where a significant majority (76%) of its population is of ethnic Chinese descent, Singapore has historical and cultural ties to China. However, this does not automatically align it with China's interests. Instead, Singapore deftly balances its relationships with both superpowers, maintaining pragmatic cooperation while avoiding alignment that could threaten its regional standing.

In an increasingly interconnected world, the dynamics between major powers such as China and the West have become a focal point of international relations. As tensions rise over trade disputes, territorial conflicts, and differing political ideologies, smaller nations often find themselves caught in the middle. Singapore, a small city-state with a population of approximately 5.6 million, has emerged as a significant player in this geopolitical landscape. Its unique historical context, strategic location, and robust economic framework position it as a potential mediator in the complex interactions between China and Western countries.

Historically, Singapore has maintained strong ties with both China and the West. Established as a British trading port in the 19th century, Singapore developed a multicultural society that includes a significant Chinese population. After gaining independence in 1965, Singapore continued to cultivate relationships with major global powers while emphasizing its sovereignty and neutrality. This delicate balancing act has enabled it to serve as a hub for diplomacy, trade, and investment in the Asia-Pacific region.

We will analyze Singapore's capabilities in addressing the issues that arise between China and the West. It will explore the nation's diplomatic strategies, including its role in international organizations, its economic partnerships, and its commitment to multilateralism. Additionally, the paper will discuss the challenges Singapore faces in maintaining its neutrality and the implications of its actions on regional and global stability. By examining these factors, this study aims to highlight Singapore's potential as a crucial intermediary in fostering dialogue and cooperation between two of the world's most influential powers.

### 1.1. Historical Context: Navigating Geopolitical Waters

Singapore's ethnic Chinese community possesses an intrinsic familiarity with Chinese language and traditions that provides considerable benefits when engaging with the mainland. However, as a small multiracial nation, portraying itself solely as an extension of China would undermine regional goodwill and damage ties with ASEAN neighbors. Since its inception, the island nation has carefully calibrated relations to satisfy founding ASEAN principles while not alienating major partners on either side of the Pacific. Within this nuanced dynamic, an artful equilibrium must be maintained to continue fostering confidence with both the emerging Asian power as well as the established supervisory role of its older ally.

#### *1.1.1. Colonial Legacy and its Lingering Impacts*

Singapore's complex history is deeply intertwined with the colonial powers that once ruled over the small island city-state. It began as a sleepy British trading post centuries ago and gradually grew within the Straits Settlements under colonial rule. The British left a significant enduring mark through facilitating the influx of diverse ethnic communities including a sizable population of Chinese descent that contribute to Singapore's dynamic multicultural character today.

#### *1.1.2. The Challenges of a Fragile New Nation*

In 1965, the fledgling nation faced enormous difficulties after separating from Malaysia as it began its independence journey as a tiny island without natural resources. However, founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew exhibited astute strategic thinking and a visionary outlook in establishing Singapore's role as a globalized hub that would leverage open trade and strategic location to drive economic progress.

#### *1.1.3. Navigating Ideological Divides of the Cold War Era*

During the volatile period of the Cold War, Singapore deftly balanced maintaining cooperative relations with Western powers while avoiding being overtly drawn into polarized alignments, adroitly sidestepping ideological tensions between the capitalist and communist blocs.

#### *1.1.4. Catalyzing Regional Cooperation Through ASEAN:*

Singapore played an instrumental part in founding the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in 1967, recognizing that promoting regional stability and economic cooperation between neighboring countries along with maintaining neutrality in superpower disputes would serve its interests.

#### *1.1.5. Embracing China's Emergence While Hedging Risks*

As China's economic power and global influence dramatically increased in recent decades, Singapore shrewdly recognized the immense opportunities for bilateral cooperation but also carefully calculated risks, serving Western companies well as a conduit for engagement with China.

#### *1.1.6. Cultural Connections and Hardnosed Pragmatism*

Shared cultural ties from its majority ethnic Chinese population helped facilitate exchanges with China, yet foreign policy consistently upheld pragmatism above sentiment, avoiding entanglement in geopolitical conflicts between great powers.

#### *1.1.7. Dependence on Open Markets and Prudent Hedging*

Driven by the reality that Singapore's economic success hinged on globalized trade and investment flows, it maintained access to both Western and Chinese markets through a high wire act of balancing relationships to reap benefits while judiciously hedging overdependence.

#### *1.1.8. A Trusted Neutral Ground for Sensitive Negotiations*

Its scrupulously neutral stances allowed Singapore to host several delicate summit and trade discussions through the decades, including the historic meeting between President Trump and Chairman Xi that signaled a potential easing of tensions in 2017.

#### *1.1.9. Managing Technological Risks Amid Digital Disruption*

As technological changes from cyber threats to intellectual property issues disrupted industry, Singapore confronted challenges balancing economic openness with information security, recognizing that strategic adjustment would be vital to long-term resilience.

#### *1.1.10. Continuing Its Delicate Balancing Act in Uncertain Times*

Amid the rise of renewed US-China rivalry, Singapore remains committed to pragmatically facilitating dialog and nuanced understanding between the two giants through its role as a neutral interpreter and trusted intermediary, meticulously safeguarding regional stability and prosperity.

Therefore, Singapore's unique position as a bridge stem from astute strategic thinking shaped by its colonial past, economic interdependence, and consistent commitment to pragmatic diplomacy - enabling it to deftly navigate geopolitical complexities.

### *1.2. Economic Interdependence: A Strategic Advantage*

Singapore has thrived through judicious economic relations with both China and Western countries, propelling its astounding rise. As a core member of ASEAN, the association added more to worldwide growth than the European Union from 2010 through 2020 due to balanced engagement. Singapore's remarkable economic success can be attributed to its ability to maintain strategic and balanced relationships with both China and Western nations. As a small but dynamic city-state, Singapore has skillfully leveraged its geographic location, open economic policies, and diplomatic neutrality to foster strong economic ties with both global superpowers. These relationships have allowed Singapore to rise beyond the limitations of its size, becoming an indispensable hub in global trade and finance. Furthermore, though overshadowed by massive economies, advantages like nimble diplomacy and an open trade-friendly environment let this island nation play an outsized global role.

#### *1.2.1. Singapore's Unique Position*

Singapore's close relationships with both China and the West place it in a unique position of influence. This dual engagement is not only beneficial for Singapore but also for the broader international community, as it serves

as a conduit for dialogue and collaboration between two geopolitical rivals. As a global financial hub, Singapore facilitates economic exchanges between the United States, Europe, and China, navigating the complex dynamics of competition and cooperation between these powers.

Singapore's strategic advantage lies in its ability to maintain political neutrality while cultivating deep economic ties with both sides. This neutrality enhances its role as a mediator and a neutral ground where business can thrive free from political entanglements. As the world faces growing tensions between the West and China, Singapore's role as a diplomatic bridge is more valuable than ever, allowing it to remain resilient and adaptable in an increasingly polarized global environment.

### *1.2.2. Trade and Investment*

Singapore plays a critical role in facilitating trade and investment flows between the West and China. As the gateway for Western companies entering the Chinese market, Singapore's well-established trade networks provide businesses with access to Asian consumers and suppliers. Conversely, it also serves as the entry point for Chinese firms looking to expand into Western markets. Singapore's robust legal framework, pro-business environment, and transparent regulations make it an attractive base for bilateral investments, allowing companies from both sides to benefit from the region's economic growth.

In recent years, trade volumes between Singapore, China, and Western economies have surged, with Singapore handling significant portions of their trade traffic. The city-state has consistently ranked among the top destinations for foreign direct investment (FDI) in Asia, as global corporations view Singapore as a stable and reliable platform to access the broader ASEAN market.

### *1.2.3. Financial Services and Connectivity*

Singapore's financial services sector plays a pivotal role in managing the complex financial relationships between China and Western countries. As a global financial hub, Singapore hosts the regional headquarters of major multinational banks, investment firms, and corporations from both the West and China. These institutions rely on Singapore to handle their cross-border transactions, financing, and investment flows.

Singapore's status as a connectivity hub is further solidified by its world-class infrastructure, strong telecommunications networks, and advanced financial technology ecosystem. This makes it an ideal location for capital flows, investment diversification, and risk management. The presence of major Western and Chinese financial institutions in Singapore also fosters greater interaction between the two, facilitating partnerships and joint ventures that drive global economic integration.

### *1.2.4. Supply Chain Integration*

As global supply chains become increasingly complex, Singapore's role in logistics and supply chain integration becomes indispensable. Its efficient infrastructure, including world-class ports, airports, and logistics facilities, makes Singapore a crucial distribution hub for Western companies with operations in China and other parts of Asia. Goods destined for Chinese markets often pass-through Singapore's ports, where they are processed and distributed with remarkable efficiency.

Conversely, Singapore also plays a vital role in facilitating the flow of goods from Chinese manufacturers to Western markets. Components, raw materials, and technological inputs sourced from Western suppliers are often shipped to Singapore before being assembled or distributed across Asia. This makes Singapore a critical node in the global supply chain, providing logistical solutions that keep global trade flowing smoothly even amid geopolitical disruptions.

### *1.2.5. Technology and Innovation*

Singapore has established itself as a leading center for technology, research, and innovation, driving economic collaboration between Western tech firms and their Chinese counterparts. The city-state's commitment to fostering a knowledge-based economy is evident through its initiatives in research and development (R&D), as well as its support for joint ventures between leading global technology companies.

Many Western technology firms, seeking to tap into China's vast consumer base and manufacturing prowess, use Singapore as a base for collaborative projects. These partnerships are often focused on emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, fintech, and green technologies, where Singapore provides an ideal environment for innovation. The country's intellectual property (IP) protection laws, high-quality workforce, and focus on STEM education have further strengthened its appeal as a hub for technology-driven collaboration.

### *1.2.6. Financial Stability and Risk Mitigation*

One of Singapore's most significant advantages is its stable financial system, which provides a safe haven for investors from both the West and China. In a world marked by rising geopolitical tensions, Singapore's reputation for stability, transparency, and sound governance makes it an attractive destination for international capital.

Singapore's financial institutions offer risk management services, including insurance, hedging, and other tools that help businesses navigate uncertainty. As a neutral party, Singapore is well-positioned to offer continuity in financial operations even when political tensions elsewhere might disrupt economic activity. This financial stability enables Singapore to act as a buffer for global investors seeking to mitigate risks associated with fluctuating markets and unpredictable geopolitical shifts.

In summary, by leveraging the above factors—its unique geopolitical positioning, robust trade networks, financial services sector, and technological prowess—Singapore has effectively transformed itself into a critical player in the global economy. Despite its relatively small size, its ability to foster economic interdependence between China and the West has enabled Singapore to thrive and exert outsized influence on the global stage. Singapore's economic interdependence with both the West and China also positions it as a vital conduit for trade, investment, and financial cooperation. Its pragmatic approach benefits all parties involved, making it an essential player in bridging the West-China divide.

### 1.3. Economic and Political Commentary on Singapore-China-US Trade (2004-2024)

Singapore and China maintain a strong trade relationship, with China being one of Singapore's largest trading partners. In 2023, Singapore exported approximately \$52 billion worth of goods to China, including key products like refined petroleum and integrated circuits. Meanwhile, Singapore imported around \$53 billion in goods from China, with top imports including electrical and electronic equipment, machinery, mineral fuels, organic chemicals, and optical and medical apparatus. Both nations are also working on upgrading their Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to encompass digital and green economies, demonstrating their commitment to enhancing free trade and deepening market cooperation.

At the same time, Singapore is also the United States' largest trading partner in Southeast Asia and ranks as the 18<sup>th</sup> largest trading partner globally. Bilateral trade between Singapore and the U.S. surpassed \$60 billion in 2024. In 2023, the U.S. exported goods worth \$29 billion to Singapore, while Singapore's exports to the U.S. reached nearly \$29 billion, resulting in a balanced trade relationship. This strong trade partnership is further bolstered by a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that has been in place since 2004, supporting approximately 215,000 American jobs.

#### 1.3.1. General Comments

These trade relationships underscore Singapore's strategic role as a global trading hub and its significant economic ties with major economies such as China and the United States. Hence it is easy to conclude that Singapore plays a pivotal role in US-China economic relations by maintaining strong ties with both nations while staying neutral in their geopolitical rivalry. As a major global trade hub, Singapore facilitates commerce between the two superpowers and serves as a gateway for businesses entering Asia and the West. Its strategic location, diplomatic neutrality, and advocacy for open trade make it a key player in promoting regional stability. By balancing its relationships with both the US and China, Singapore helps mitigate tensions and ensures continued economic cooperation between the world's largest economies.

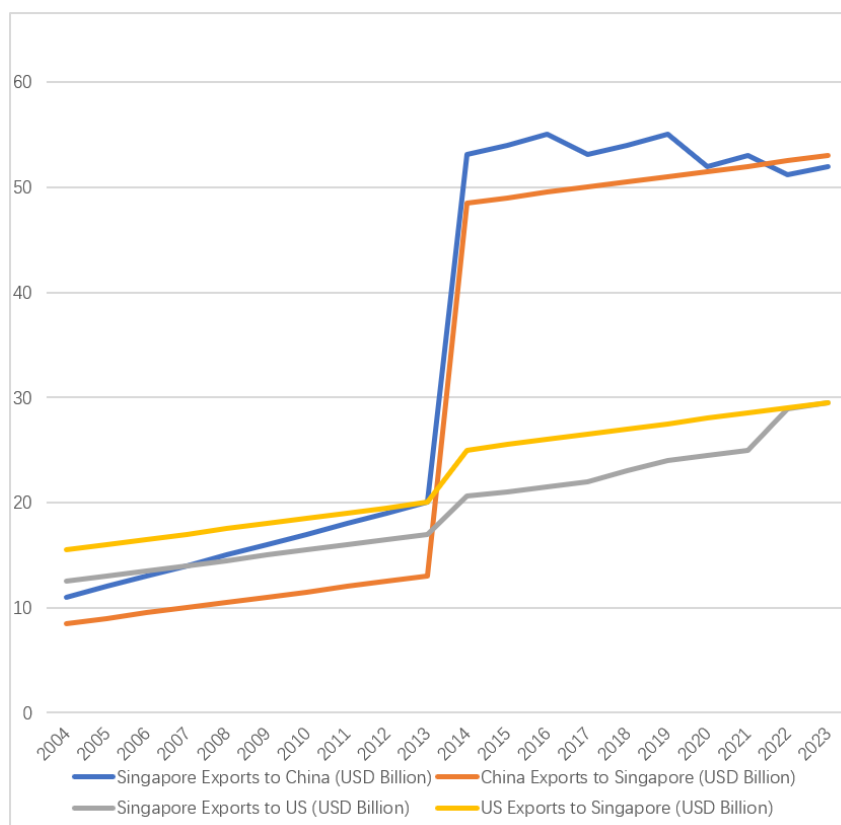


Figure 1. Singapore-China-US Trade Records (2003-2023).

**Table 1.**  
Comparative Sheet: Foreign Trade Records (2003-2023).

Year	Singapore Exports to China (USD Billion)	China Exports to Singapore. (USD Billion)	Singapore Exports to USA (USD Billion)	USA Exports to Singapore (USD Billion)
2003	10.5	8.2	12	15
2004	11	8.5	12.5	15.5
2005	12	9	13	16
2006	13	9.5	13.5	16.5
2007	14	10	14	17
2008	15	10.5	14.5	17.5
2009	16	11	15	18
2010	17	11.5	15.5	18.5
2011	18	12	16	19
2012	19	12.5	16.5	19.5
2013	20	13	17	20
2014	53.1	48.5	20.6	25
2015	54	49	21	25.5
2016	55	49.5	21.5	26
2017	53.1	50	22	26.5
2018	54	50.5	23	27
2019	55	51	24	27.5
2020	52	51.5	24.5	28
2021	53	52	25	28.5
2022	51.2	52.5	28.9	29
2023	52	53	29.5	29.5

**Source:**The above data provided come from reliable organizations such as the United Nations COMTRADE database, Observatory of Economic Complexity, and Singapore's Department of Statistics.

1.3.2. Singapore’s Role in US-China Economic Relations

Singapore has strategically positioned itself within the complex economic dynamic between the United States and China, playing a multifaceted role that emphasizes its significance as a mediator and balancer. As a neutral ground for dialogue, Singapore facilitates discussions between these two global powers, showcasing its diplomatic skills and commitment to fostering regional stability. Despite its small geographical size, Singapore has adeptly maintained robust economic ties with both the US and China without explicitly siding with either in their geopolitical rivalry. This balanced approach allows the city-state to reap economic benefits from both relationships while minimizing the risks associated with being drawn into their ongoing conflicts. Singapore's strategic location and advanced infrastructure have transformed it into a vital hub for international commerce. The nation is heavily reliant on trade, with China being its largest trading partner and the US serving as its largest single-country investor, accounting for over 20% of all foreign direct investment (FDI) in Singapore. This unique position enables Singapore to support both US trade policies and China's economic initiatives, ensuring that it remains an essential partner for both countries.

Moreover, the Singaporean government has effectively coordinated policies that promote trade, investment, and economic cooperation with both nations. These initiatives not only enhance bilateral relations but also solidify Singapore's status as an attractive destination for businesses seeking opportunities in Asia. Beyond its economic role, Singapore exerts significant influence in regional organizations and forums, advocating for greater economic integration and stability across the Asia-Pacific region. It champions initiatives like ASEAN centrality and has been proactive in concluding free trade agreements, including participation in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity.

In an era marked by rising tensions between the US and China, Singapore's ability to maintain strong trade ties with both sides serves as a buffer against economic instability. This resilience makes it an appealing destination for global investors who prioritize stability and predictability in international markets. Additionally, Singapore acts as a cultural and educational bridge between East and West. Its multicultural society and world-class educational institutions attract talent from both China and the US, fostering collaboration and mutual understanding among future leaders. However, despite its efforts to remain neutral, Singapore faces challenges such as pressure from China regarding its ethnic Chinese population and the need to balance security cooperation with the US against its economic ties with China. In summary, Singapore's strategic, balanced, and proactive approach has enabled it to navigate the complexities of the US-China economic relationship effectively. By positioning itself as an "honest broker" and maintaining clarity in its rhetoric towards both parties, Singapore has not only strengthened its economy but also contributed significantly to regional stability and growth. This multifaceted role solidifies Singapore's status as an influential hub in US-China trilateral relations. Hence, Singapore has strategically positioned itself in the complex economic dynamic between the United States and China.

In summary, Singapore’s strategic, balanced, and proactive approach has enabled it to navigate the complexities of the US-China economic relationship. This has strengthened its economy while contributing to regional stability and growth, solidifying its role as an economic mediator, strategic balancer, and influential hub in US-China trilateral relations.

1.4. Navigating the New Cold War: Lessons from History

The contemporary geopolitical landscape is increasingly defined by strategic competition between the United States and China, a rivalry often likened to a "new Cold War." While the ideological contest of the 20th century pitted capitalism against communism, today's contest is framed around a multipolar world, where economic, technological, and military supremacy are central. For Singapore, a small but strategically located nation, the

ability to balance relations between these two global powers has become both an opportunity and a challenge. As the rivalry intensifies, Singapore finds itself once again at the crossroads of great-power competition, much like it was during the original Cold War.

As tensions rise amid ongoing tensions between China and the United States, balancing relations grows increasingly complex for Singapore. Managing ties with both amid disentangling ties in arenas including commerce, innovation, funds, and the flow of human intellect proves a high-wire act. That Singapore maintains its role providing neutral ground for interactions between China, Taiwan, and America highlights its important yet precarious position. Relations demand nuanced navigation to safeguard the small nation's security and success in an unsettled climate of uncertainty and unease between the globe's superpowers.

#### *1.4.1. Battle of Ideas: A Historical Comparison*

The original Cold War, spanning from the late 1940s to the early 1990s, was primarily driven by a battle of ideologies. On one side, the United States and its allies championed democratic governance and free-market capitalism, while on the other, the Soviet Union and its allies promoted socialism and centrally planned economies. This clash of ideas manifested not only in the realms of politics and governance but also in competing visions for economic prosperity and societal organization.

Economic strength and stability were central to both superpowers' efforts to recruit allies and influence global opinion during the Cold War. The United States, with its vast wealth and innovation-driven economy, was able to support allies through mechanisms like the Marshall Plan, which provided reconstruction aid to war-torn European nations. In contrast, the Soviet Union struggled to maintain both its military spending (exemplified by the arms and space races) and its centrally planned economic model, which ultimately faltered under the weight of inefficiency and stagnation.

In the modern era, while the ideological focus has shifted, economic dominance and technological innovation remain critical elements of the competition between the US and China. China's rapid economic ascent, driven by state-led capitalism, has challenged the liberal economic order long dominated by the West. Both powers now seek to build spheres of influence by offering economic incentives, technological partnerships, and strategic alliances across the globe.

#### *1.4.2. Singapore's Cold War Context: A Precedent for Strategic Positioning*

Singapore's rise during the Cold War period offers valuable lessons in how small states can thrive amid great-power rivalries. While much of Singapore's success is attributed to the leadership of its founding Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew, external geopolitical forces also played a significant role in shaping the city-state's early development.

During the Cold War, Singapore was a key outpost for Western military presence in Southeast Asia, particularly for the British. Britain maintained air and naval bases in Singapore as part of its military commitment to the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO), an anti-communist bloc aimed at containing Soviet and Chinese influence in the region. These military bases contributed significantly to Singapore's economy, accounting for 20% of its national income at the time. In addition to providing direct employment to thousands of Singaporeans, the bases stimulated the growth of ancillary industries, including construction, logistics, and services, laying the groundwork for Singapore's later economic diversification.

Lee Kuan Yew's pragmatic foreign policy was another key to Singapore's success during this period. He skillfully balanced relationships with the West and China, ensuring that Singapore remained relevant and influential, despite its small size. His ability to align Singapore's interests with broader geopolitical trends while maintaining the nation's independence is a lesson in *realpolitik* that remains relevant today.

#### *1.4.3. Lessons for the New Cold War: Adapting to a Changing Geopolitical Landscape*

As the new Cold War between the United States and China takes shape, it is clear that this era of competition will differ from the last in important ways. While the ideological divide of the 20th century was stark, today's rivalry is more nuanced and multifaceted. Both powers are deeply interconnected economically, and their competition is increasingly taking place in the realms of technology, trade, and influence over international institutions.

Singapore's history of navigating Cold War dynamics offers important lessons for today. Just as it did during the first Cold War, Singapore must recognize the importance of boundaries and balance in its foreign policy. The city-state has always been careful to avoid aligning too closely with any one power, opting instead for a non-aligned strategy that prioritizes economic openness and political neutrality. This approach allows Singapore to leverage the opportunities presented by both the United States and China without becoming embroiled in their geopolitical rivalries.

At the same time, Singapore's historical experience also highlights the benefits of capitalizing on external forces to fuel domestic growth. During the original Cold War, Singapore's economic boom was partly driven by its ability to integrate into the global economy, attracting foreign investment and fostering trade relationships with both Western and Eastern blocs. Today, Singapore continues to benefit from its status as a global financial hub, facilitating capital flows between East and West while maintaining a reputation for stability and reliability.

However, the nature of the US-China rivalry means that Singapore will face increasing pressure to choose sides in areas such as technology and security. The ongoing decoupling between the US and China in key sectors—such as semiconductors, artificial intelligence, and telecommunications—creates challenges for Singapore's traditionally agnostic approach to foreign policy. The ability to navigate this delicate balancing act will be crucial for Singapore's continued success.

Additionally, as global powers compete for influence in Southeast Asia, Singapore must be mindful of the lessons of history: alliances are often transient, and economic success is closely tied to external factors beyond any one nation's control. By fostering regional cooperation through platforms like ASEAN, Singapore can work to

create a more multipolar regional order that buffers the effects of great-power competition and ensures stability and prosperity for smaller nations.

In this new era of strategic rivalry, Singapore's ability to adapt and thrive will depend on its continued commitment to neutral diplomacy, economic openness, and pragmatic foreign policy. The lessons drawn from its Cold War experience serve as a valuable guide, reminding Singapore of the importance of flexibility, balance, and foresight in navigating an unsettled and unpredictable global environment. Through careful and nuanced navigation, Singapore can continue to play a key role in shaping the geopolitical landscape of the 21st century, even as the dynamics of great-power competition evolve.

In summary, understanding the historical context and learning from the first Cold War can enhance resilience and guide decision-making in the emerging Sino-American rivalry. Singapore's experience provides valuable insights for other nations seeking stability and development amidst uncertainty.

## 2. Conclusion

Singapore's role as a neutral interpreter of China to the West is not accidental but a result of deliberate pragmatism. As geopolitical dynamics evolve, Singapore's delicate dance between superpowers will continue to shape regional stability and cooperation. Singapore's unique strategic position as a small yet consequential nation has allowed deft maneuvering between China and Western powers over time.

First, remarkable economic growth post-independence in 1965 positioned Singapore as a model of prosperity under single-party governance. This spurred China's reforms, viewing Singapore as exemplar for development. Notable leaders like Lee Kuan Yew cultivated personal rapport with China's leaders, with Deng Xiaoping describing Singapore as China's developmental template.

However, dynamics shifted as China's economic ascendance accelerated alongside military strengthening, diverging Singapore and China slightly. Singapore moreover bolstered ties with major powers such as the US, India, and Japan. Still, discreet diplomacy and strategic alliances allowed quietly resolving issues with Beijing, becoming America's closest Southeast Asian ally following Thailand's coup and the Philippines electing Rodrigo Duterte.

Most recently, China and Singapore jointly announced an ambitious "All-Round High-Quality Future-Oriented Partnership," reflecting both countries' aims to strategize the direction of bilateral relations. Singapore reaffirmed supporting China's high-quality development, with China recognizing Singapore's role in modernization. Both will collaborate effectively implementing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement and enhancing the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area for mutual economic growth.

Singapore's delicate balancing—navigating economic links, strategic alignments and geopolitical fluctuations—continues shaping its key bridging role between China and the West.

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